

A light blue map of the Houston-Galveston area serves as the background. It shows the outlines of various counties and the Gulf of Mexico coastline. The text is overlaid on this map.

Regional Conservation Framework

Galveston Bay Council

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Regional Conservation Framework

March 16, 2021

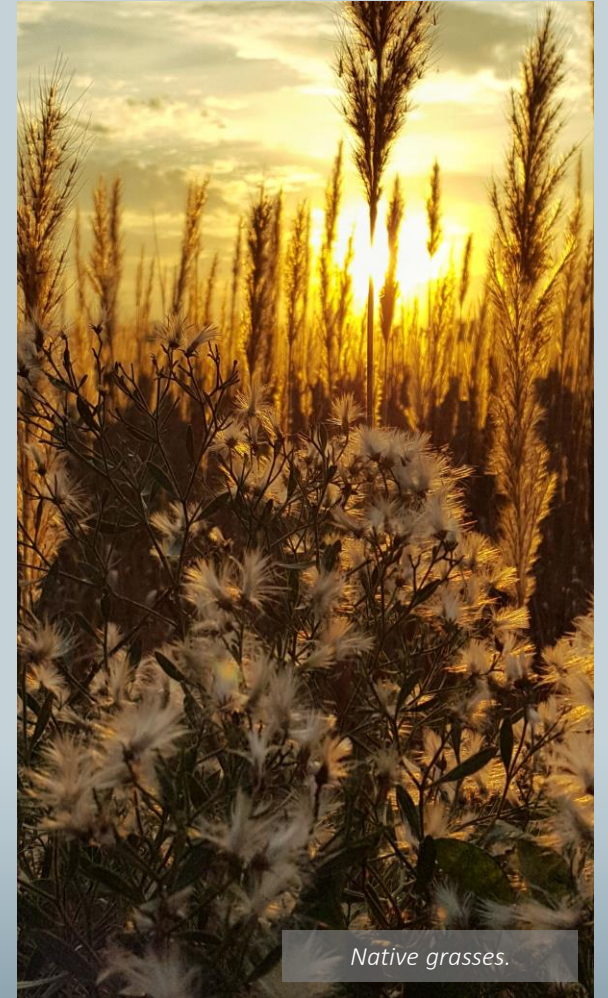
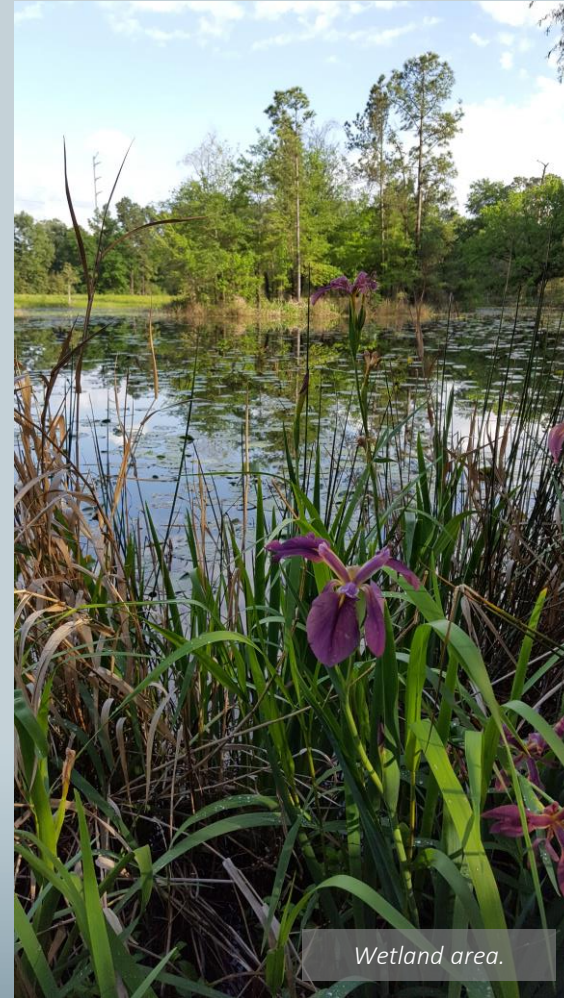
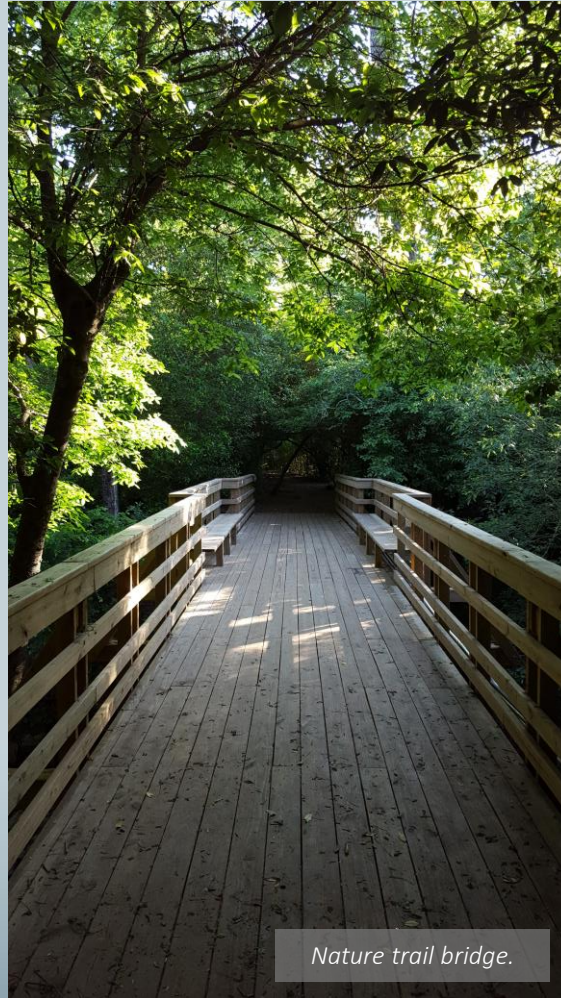
Photo: Justin Bower



About the Framework

- Based on extensive input from local governments and other stakeholders
- Vision & voluntary strategies
- Tools & funding resources
- Basis for ongoing H-GAC conservation efforts

The Case for Conservation



Three Big Initiatives

A Flourishing Treescape



Regional Greenway System



Signature Projects



Strategies & Actions - Snapshot

LEVERAGE

- Flood Mitigation
- Water Quality
- Transportation
- Economic Development

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SUPPORT

- Partnership Building
- Metrics
- Messaging

FUNDING

- Priority Project List
- Grant Matchmaking
- New Financing Tools

Recommended Strategies & Actions

SECTION 5: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The text below details the goal of and recommended actions for the three strategies detailed in the Regional Conservation Framework.

STRATEGY 1: LEVERAGE

GOAL: Use existing H-GAC programs, projects, and funding to integrate conservation more fully into planning and implementation activities.

ACTION 1: Working with community and economic development organizations to broaden access to natural areas and open space throughout the region and create opportunities for local businesses.

ACTION 2: Convening a Regional Forestry Work Group composed of local government stakeholders to coordinate with other organizations on large-scale initiatives to enhance the region's treescape.

ACTION 3: Expanding and updating H-GAC's online Forestry Tool,⁸ which enables users to take a detailed look at the tree canopy, down to the street tree level.

ACTION 4: Integrating conservation planning metrics into the following H-GAC-led planning initiatives:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Regional Transportation Plan
- H-GAC-led Watershed Protection Plans
- H-GAC-led regional and watershed-level flood mitigation projects

ACTION 5: Working with local partners, including nurseries, to increase the supply of native tree species available for tree planting initiatives.

⁸<https://datalab.h-gac.com/urbanforestry>



STRATEGY 2: SUPPORT

GOAL: Support and expand existing efforts in the region through partnerships and communication, data access, and unified messaging.

ACTION 1: Compiling data on existing best practices and policy options, including relevant ordinances, and sharing with local governments.

ACTION 2: Developing and maintaining customizable public awareness materials for communities to use on social media and in press releases, posters, and flyers to build support for conservation initiatives.

ACTION 3: Engaging with decision-makers in the region to discuss the economic benefits of specific conservation strategies.

ACTION 4: Establishing and convening a conservation peer exchange forum, composed of local governments and professionals working on conservation issues across the region.

ACTION 5: Expanding and updating the economic valuation data presented in The Conservation Fund's Houston-Galveston Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services Assessment,⁹ exploring the benefit-relevant indicators for specific conservation practices and sharing those data with local governments and professionals.

ACTION 6: Working with local governments and private sector organizations to encourage conservation strategies – such as tree protection, low impact development, and connecting to existing greenways – being incorporated in community design early on.

ACTION 7: Providing support to local governments on data analysis and mapping, integrating factors such as existing land type and socio-economic data.

STRATEGY 3: FUND

GOAL: Aid local governments or regional partners in receiving new funding or finding projects to fit existing funding sources.

⁹https://www.conservationfund.org/images/projects/files/Houston_Galveston_Report.pdf

ACTION 1: Connecting local governments with nongovernmental organizations working toward similar goals or project outcomes.

ACTION 2: Developing funding partnerships that support land acquisition, development, management, and promotion.

ACTION 3: Establishing and maintaining a list of priority conservation projects for the region.

ACTION 4: Maintaining and expanding the online Conservation Funding Guide and promoting the tool with local governments.

ACTION 5: Providing support to requesting local governments in accessing grant funding to support conservation initiatives.

ACTION 6: Researching and distributing information on non-grant finance tools, such as bonds, donations from landowners, property tax dedications, and the establishment of a Regional Conservation District.



Conservation Funding Guide



Houston-Galveston Area Council

H-GAC Resources

Search H-GAC

Search

Winter Storm Recovery Resources

Conservation Funding Guide

Search Options

Program Name

Land Type(s)

- ☐ All
- ☐ Agriculture
- ☐ Coastal
- ☐ Forest

- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Watershed
- ☐ Wetlands

Use(s)

- ☐ Conservation Easements
- ☐ Environmental Quality
- ☐ Flood Mitigation
- ☐ Green Infrastructure
- ☐ Habitat
- ☐ Land Acquisition

- ☐ Outreach and Education
- ☐ Recreation
- ☐ Resiliency
- ☐ Restoration
- ☐ Wildlife

Source(s)

- ☐ Federal
- ☐ State
- ☐ Other

Reset

Search

Regional Conservation
Regional Conservation Framework
Conservation Toolbox
Ecosystem Service Benefits Matrices
Conservation Funding Guide
Conservation Model Projects
Conservation Mapping Tool



Cypress trees.



Prairie grasses.



Wildflowers.

Other Resources & Tools

- Conservation Toolbox
- Ecosystem Services Benefits
- Model Projects
- Conservation Mapping Tool

Contact Information

JEFF TAEBEL

Director, Community & Environmental
Houston-Galveston Area Council
713-993-4560
Jeff.Taebel@h-gac.com

CHERYL MERGO

Manager, Community & Environmental
Houston-Galveston Area Council
713-993-4520
Cheryl.Mergo@h-gac.com

Learn more about this project at h-gac.com/regional-conservation

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